

conspersaria might be in Bulgaria. He very kindly examined all four specimens and reported that all are, in fact, *innocentaria*. Accordingly, our record of *D. conspersaria* (1 ♂, 3 ♀ ♀) is no longer valid and should be deleted from the published list. For those interested, the distribution of *Dyscia* species may be gleaned from Trusch & Erlacher (2001. Zur Morphologie, Verbreitung, Bionomie und Identifikation der *Dyscia*-Arten (Lepidoptera, Geometridae: Ennominae). – *Bonner Zoologische Monographien* **49**: 1 – 116).— COLIN W. PLANT, 14 West Road, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 3QP (E-mail: cpauk1@ntlworld.com)

**The Brimstone Moth *Opisthograptis luteolata* (L.) (Lep.: Geometridae).
Comments on the early generation**

The relatively lightly marked, moths of generation 1a (from winter pupae) regularly produce even more lightly marked specimens on occasions and which appear to be confined to this generation in the bivoltine population of north-west Kent. On 15 May 2004, a specimen almost devoid of brown markings attended my garden mv light. It retained only the forewing dark sub-apical mark, but not the brown triangle beyond, and the dark outline of the discal spot but not its usual accompanying costal blotch. The hind wings retained a weak discal macule. It would seem best to be classified as ab. *flavissima* Krulikowskyi, which in Goodson and Reid (unpublished, for internal use in the British Museum (Natural History)), is translated as “Almost entirely yellow with only slight remnants of the usual costal markings”. I possess two further specimens from the same source, taken on 17 May 1989 and 15 May 1998.

This aberration may be considered one of a series which represent stages in reduction of brown markings, culminating in their complete absence as illustrated in Barrett (1900. *The Lepidoptera of the British Islands*. VI), which he asserts are a feature of the species in Somerset and other western counties. Two others in this series are ab. *apicolutea* Cockayne and ab. *delineata* Lempke, both of regular occurrence here, but only in generation 1a. Thus, I have specimens of ab. *apicolutea* from Dartford dated 13 May 1986, 9 May 1989 and 14 June 1989 and ab. *delineata* from Dartford on 15 May 1988, 17 May 1989 and 24 May 1989.

Generation 1b specimens in north-west Kent are in general larger, brighter, the brown markings more intense; the forewing has a very well developed apical triangle and similarly strong adjacent costal mark representing the termination of the weak postmedian line. The forewing mid-costal blotch is prominent and often encroaches along the costa to some extent; marginal dots at vein ends are usually well developed on the hind wings, but less so on the forewings. Although the two emergences of the first generation tend to overlap they are usually readily distinguishable. It is a relatively stable form, variation tending in the direction of heavier markings.

The only aberration in generation 1b I have encountered is a specimen of the very rare ab. *nebulosa* West from Dartford Heath on 7 June 1979 – a specimen with considerable brownish suffusion and determined as of gen. 1b by, among other features, well pronounced dots at vein ends on all wings. A specimen was taken by I. Lorimer at Totteridge, Hertfordshire in 1963 and was exhibited at the Annual

Exhibition of the South London Entomological and Natural History Society and is illustrated in their Proceedings for that year, but without complete date. The Dartford specimen is illustrated in *Ent. Soc.* **87**:141. The only other example of which I am aware is that taken on the Isle of Mull, in October 1877. According to Heslop-Harrison (1955. *Ent. Rec.* **67**:175), on some of the Inner Hebridean islands *O. luteolata* has two emergences a year, the first from over-wintered pupae and the second, in August, from over-wintered larvae, a regime in part corresponding to that in south-east England. However, a specimen taken as late as October suggests a representative of a true second generation.

In the Highlands of Scotland *O. luteolata* is mainly univoltine with one emergence period from over-wintered pupae; all wild larvae I have obtained from rowan *Sorbus aucuparia* have pupated in the autumn, and the moths have emerged in April and May. They appear to be the largest strain in Britain, and in appearance otherwise resemble most closely those of generation 1a in north-west Kent. Regarding the brown markings, the forewing apical blotch is not as solid, while the mid-costal mark shows little tendency to encroach along the costa, contrasting sharply with southern specimens from generation 1b, but resembling those of generation 1a. These univoltine moths also display a tendency towards obsolescence of the marginal dots at the vein ends, and the transverse fascia are more obscure. Thus they most resemble generation 1a specimens from south-east England, except in size, and contrast sharply with those of generations 1b and 2 further south.

The pale yellow variety of *O. luteolata* also appears to be of higher incidence in certain generations than others. This is ab. *intermedia* Harrison, perhaps often overlooked and mistaken for a faded or worn specimen. I possess three specimens from Dartford dated 27 August 1982, 16 September 1998 and 9 September 1989 – thus all from generation 2. A fourth specimen was bred from a wild larva on rowan at Grantown on Spey, Moray, emerging 22 April 1964.

The above observations suggest that within the differences which characterise the different emergences there is a tendency for further variations to occur, and these may be specific to one or more generations. Some observations may not be statistically significant, especially those made on populations other than in north-west Kent where thirty-five years of mv light operation has been the main basis of observation of a very common species.— B. K. WEST, 56 Briar Road, Dartford, Kent. DA5 2HN.

A melanic Marbled White (*Melanargia galathea* (L.) ab. *nigra* Frohawk) in Kent

On 27 July 2004, John Websper and I were visiting Lydden Down National Nature Reserve, near Dover, when we noticed what we thought at first to be a dark coloured Meadow Brown *Maniola jurtina* (L.) flying in a rather odd manner. We followed it and obtained good, close views over the next ten to fifteen minutes and noted that the upper sides of all four wings were almost entirely black. When the butterfly settled in order to feed, the usual pale markings of the underside of a “normal” Marbled White were clearly visible. The post-discal ocelli were seen in spaces 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7. This variety of the Marbled White has been described as ab. *nigra* Frohawk (Frohawk,